



U.S. Department of Education  
Office of Inspector General

# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2023-2028



Office of Inspector General  
Sandra D. Bruce  
Inspector General

September 2022

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The Office of Inspector General's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2023–2028 is available on the ED OIG website at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oig/strategicplansperformancereports.html>.

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# Message from the Inspector General

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education (Department) Office of Inspector General (OIG), I am pleased to share our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2023–2028. Through this plan, we affirm and advance our long-standing commitment to a diverse and an equi-

table, inclusive, and accessible workplace that will help ensure that the work we produce is accessible to the diverse public we serve.

In fiscal year (FY) 2019, we released our first diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) strategic plan. That plan set the framework and initial implementation of our DEIA initiative. Due entirely to the commitment of the OIG staff and their respect and appreciation for one another, we, as an organization, have made significant strides in advancing DEIA within the OIG. But DEIA is a journey, not a destination. Getting on the path and beginning the journey was the first step. With this, our second Strategic Plan, we're taking the next step. As you will see in the pages of this report, for FYs 2023–2028, our DEIA efforts will continue to focus on our people, our workplaces, and our products and services. We will invest in our people by committing to comprehensive human capital strategies to attract, develop, and retain a diverse and skilled workforce. We will take actions to ensure that our workplaces are accessible, inclusive, and harassment-free environments where OIG staff can be their authentic selves and thrive. And we will add a DEIA focus to our work when possible and will be sure that all of our products and services are accessible to all.

Our DEIA strategic plan aligns with the goals presented in our organizational Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2023–2028 and follows Federal policies and requirements for agencies to strengthen DEIA in their workforce policies, practices, and culture. Our plan also incorporates concepts from "[Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility: A Roadmap for Offices of Inspector General](#)," issued in June 2022 by the DEIA Work Group of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency. I have the honor of chairing that Work Group and worked closely with staff from across the Inspector General community in crafting this first-of-its kind guide. The roadmap presents steps and opportunities to advance DEIA within our individual organizations and as a community. We incorporate a number of elements from the roadmap into this strategic plan, which I am confident will help us become a model employer within the Federal government.

In closing, I want to once again thank OIG staff for their active engagement and participation in producing this plan. It is testament to their commitment to one another and their shared belief that by working together and valuing the contributions, skills, and strengths of every member of our team, we will be a premier, high-performing 21st century organization.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandra D. Bruce".

Sandra D. Bruce  
Inspector General



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**"A diverse mix of voices leads to better discussions, decisions, and outcomes for everyone." Sundar Pichai**





## Mission

Cultivate and sustain a diverse workforce and an inclusive, equitable, and accessible workplace that allows individuals to attain their greatest potential and be engaged, motivated, and empowered in their efforts to provide outstanding oversight of the Department of Education's programs and operations.

## Vision

Incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility concepts and practices into all facets of OIG operations by maximizing the unique strengths of all our employees through the synergy of our differences and capabilities.

## Definitions

The OIG uses the following definitions of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility, which we've adapted from the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.

**DIVERSITY** is a collection of individual attributes that together help agencies pursue organizational objectives efficiently and effectively.

**EQUITY** is the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

**INCLUSION** is a culture that connects each employee to the organization. Inclusion empowers people to contribute their skills and perspective for the benefit of the organizational performance and outcomes.

**ACCESSIBILITY** encompasses how organizations ensure equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience, as well as how organizations make space for the characteristics that each person brings to the workforce.



"In diversity there is beauty and there is strength."

Maya Angelou



## Goals and Strategies

In the following sections, we present the goals for DEIA at the OIG for FYs 2023–2028, and the key strategies we will employ to reach them. These strategies provide a framework for the activities that we will perform to achieve our goals. Our plan also includes information on how we will evaluate our efforts and provides examples of the action items that we will use to assess how well we are achieving our desired objectives. We will detail all performance measures and share our progress related thereto in our annual progress reports.

### Goal 1. Cultivate a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

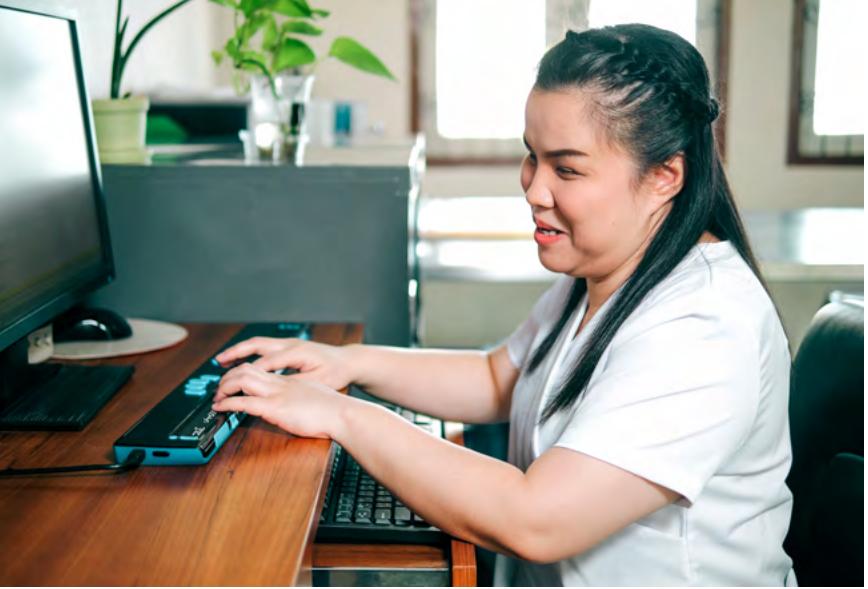
Commit to human capital strategies that help attract, hire, develop, and retain a diverse, skilled, engaged, and inclusive workforce.

### Goal 2. Foster an Inclusive, Equitable, Accessible, and Safe Workplace

Invest in creating a harassment-free and inclusive work environment where employees feel appreciated, safe, and able to excel in their positions.

### Goal 3. Deliver Inclusive and Accessible Products and Services

Deliver high-quality and accessible audits, investigations, outreach, and other work products that align with our DEIA initiatives.





# GOAL 1

## Cultivate a Diverse and Inclusive Workforce

**Commit to human capital strategies that help to attract, hire, develop, and retain a diverse, skilled, engaged, and inclusive workforce.**

### Strategies for Reaching this Goal

**Strategy 1.** Develop recruitment processes that reach and appeal to a diverse, highly qualified pool of candidates.

**Strategy 2.** Identify and implement policies that advance equitable hiring practices.

**Strategy 3.** Promote fair and equitable access to vertical and horizontal career and training opportunities.

**Strategy 4.** Optimize employee engagement and the employee experience.

### Examples of Actions We Will Take to Meet This Goal and Measure Our Progress

- Examine metrics related to hiring to determine whether the OIG's hiring practices are effectively engaging a diverse pool of candidates.
- Assess applicant screening and selection process to identify and mitigate potential biases and minimize potential barriers in support of hiring diverse and highly qualified candidates.
- Establish and evaluate promotion and retention practices with a focus on advancing equitable outcomes.
- Use engagement surveys and other forms of employee feedback to identify workplace dynamics impacting DEIA efforts.

# GOAL 2

## Foster an Inclusive, Equitable, Accessible, and Safe Workplace

**Invest in creating a harassment-free and inclusive work environment where employees feel appreciated, safe, and able to excel in their positions.**

### Strategies for Reaching this Goal

**Strategy 1.** Create a culture of belonging and purpose.

**Strategy 2.** Identify and remove barriers in the physical and virtual work environments that impede an employee's ability to fully engage and contribute to executing the OIG's mission.

**Strategy 3.** Advance initiatives that foster workplace safety and employee recognition and engagement.

**Strategy 4.** Enhance and maintain an online DEIA portal for staff to easily obtain information related to DEIA policies, procedures, resources, and other helpful information.

### Examples of Actions We Will Take to Meet This Goal and Measure Our Progress

- Create and maintain opportunities for engagement, recognition, education, and collaboration.
- Promote work-life balance through policies and programs that adapt to changing conditions to meet the evolving needs of employees.
- Properly educate and equip employees and supervisors to address harassment in the workplace without fear of retaliation.
- Dedicate and retain resources to support DEIA activities.

# GOAL 3

## Deliver Inclusive and Accessible Products and Services

**Deliver high-quality and accessible audits, investigations, outreach, and other work products that align with our DEIA initiatives.**

### Strategies for Reaching this Goal

**Strategy 1.** Advance DEIA elements in OIG work products.

**Strategy 2.** Develop processes to ensure equity of opportunity when assigning staff to work assignments and special projects and initiatives.

**Strategy 3.** Ensure the OIG's work products, services, and digital presence are accessible to a vast audience, including people with visual and hearing impairments and individuals with limited English proficiency.

**Strategy 4.** Enhance outreach efforts and create new opportunities to message and deliver work products, services, and information to diverse stakeholders.

### Examples of Actions We Will Take to Meet This Goal and Measure Our Progress

- Add at least one assessment of an aspect of DEIA into the OIG annual work plan.
- Regularly assess internal processes that seek to ensure equity in assignments and projects.
- Regularly monitor and evaluate OIG programs, accessible information technology, services, and policies for compliance and any other regulatory guidance to identify opportunities to improve the quality and consistency of access.
- Develop a communications strategy on DEIA that encompasses various communications formats.



## Accountability and Transparency

The OIG is committed to achieving the goals of this plan in a transparent matter consistent with the purpose of its DEIA initiative. This will include timelines, deliverables, and effective performance measures. In this plan, we share some examples of the actions we will take to achieve the goals presented herein. We will monitor and evaluate our performance in carrying out these actions, which will be linked to other continuous improvement efforts to address those areas with the greatest need, as well as actions to address barriers that directly affect equal access, competition, and opportunity. Specific action goals and performance measures will be established for each fiscal year covered by this plan, and we will note how we fared towards achieving those measures in annual progress reports. We will denote the results of each measurement as completed, continuous, or initiated. These annual progress reports will also establish our performance measures for the fiscal year ahead. Further, through these annual reports we will highlight the continuous education progress we are making in our DEIA initiative overall, using the maturity model highlighted in the CIGIE DEIA Roadmap. Those maturity metrics levels are as follows.

**1—Ad Hoc.** The OIG has not formally incorporated DEIA continuous education initiatives into its goals and strategies. However, it still may make DEIA training available to staff and announce DEIA events that OIG staff can attend.

**2—Defined.** The OIG provides required DEIA training to its staff and shares DEIA information and promotes DEIA activities to the extent that Federal laws and other mandates require such training and activities.

**3—Progressive.** The OIG has established policies and procedures to advance DEIA throughout the organization. The OIG implements these policies and procedures in various ways, including but not limited to ensuring that all OIG staff have access to regular DEIA training and that the OIG consistently promotes DEIA activities for optimal awareness. The OIG routinely assesses its DEIA continuous education and uses the results of such assessments to determine areas of potential improvement.

**4—Optimized.** The OIG has formally incorporated DEIA continuous education into its mission and guiding principles. Consistent with current leading practices, the OIG regularly promotes and/or conducts DEIA events throughout the year; provides or otherwise ensures access to DEIA training for all staff; and, as appropriate and resources allow, collaborates with other OIGs in DEIA activities, trainings, and other continuous education events for the entire OIG community.



## DEIA at the OIG

The OIG is committed to integrating DEIA into our operations and mission work, as diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences are critical to how we do our work and who we are as an OIG. As such, the OIG has established a DEIA infrastructure. Through the efforts of these people and teams, the OIG looks to help empower staff and support leaders in optimizing our DEIA efforts.

### OIG Chief Diversity Officer

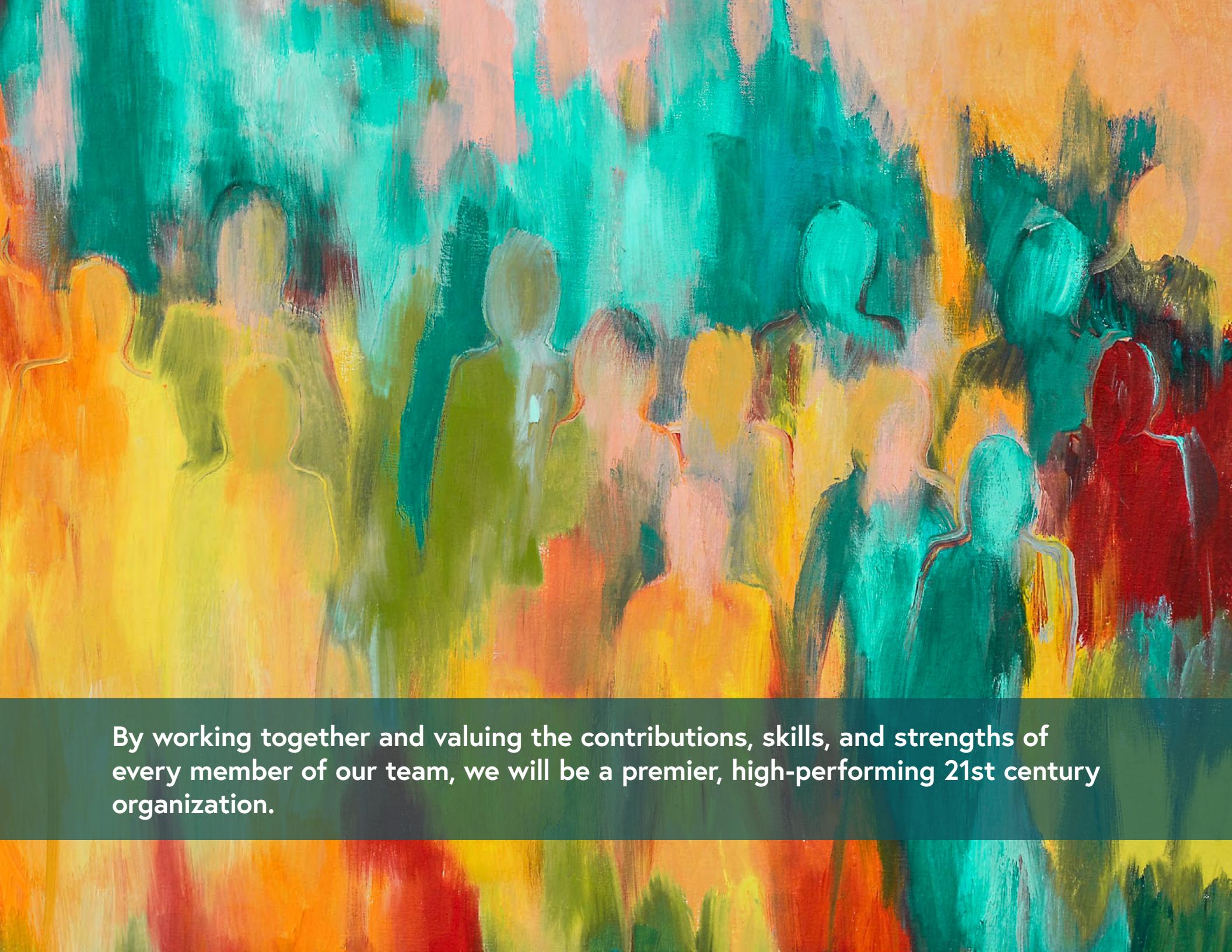
The Chief Diversity Officer leads the OIG's efforts to ensure integration of DEIA into our business processes, building an inclusive workplace environment, and retaining, developing, advancing, and recruiting a diverse and talented OIG team.

### OIG Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee focuses on increasing awareness of DEIA in the workplace. The committee is composed of staff from all OIG units and works with OIG staff at all levels—from entry level to senior leadership—to develop and share information on trainings and training opportunities, promote awareness of our nation's many, rich, and diverse cultures, and host informative and engaging events celebrating these cultures, experiences, interests, and outlooks.

### CIGIE DEIA Work Group

The OIG is active in the CIGIE DEIA Work Group: Inspector General Bruce serves as chair of the work group, and OIG staff are engaged in and contribute to the work group's efforts. The CIGIE DEIA Work Group is composed of inspectors general from more than 45 Federal agencies. It looks to affirm, advance, and augment CIGIE's commitment to promote a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce and workplace environment throughout the OIG community that will help ensure comprehensive work, produced by a well-trained and highly skilled workforce, to be made accessible, when possible, to the diverse public we serve.

The background of the slide is a vibrant, abstract painting of a diverse crowd. The figures are represented by various colored shapes, including shades of green, yellow, orange, red, and blue, with some having distinct outlines and others more blended. The overall effect is one of a diverse and dynamic community.

**By working together and valuing the contributions, skills, and strengths of every member of our team, we will be a premier, high-performing 21st century organization.**

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